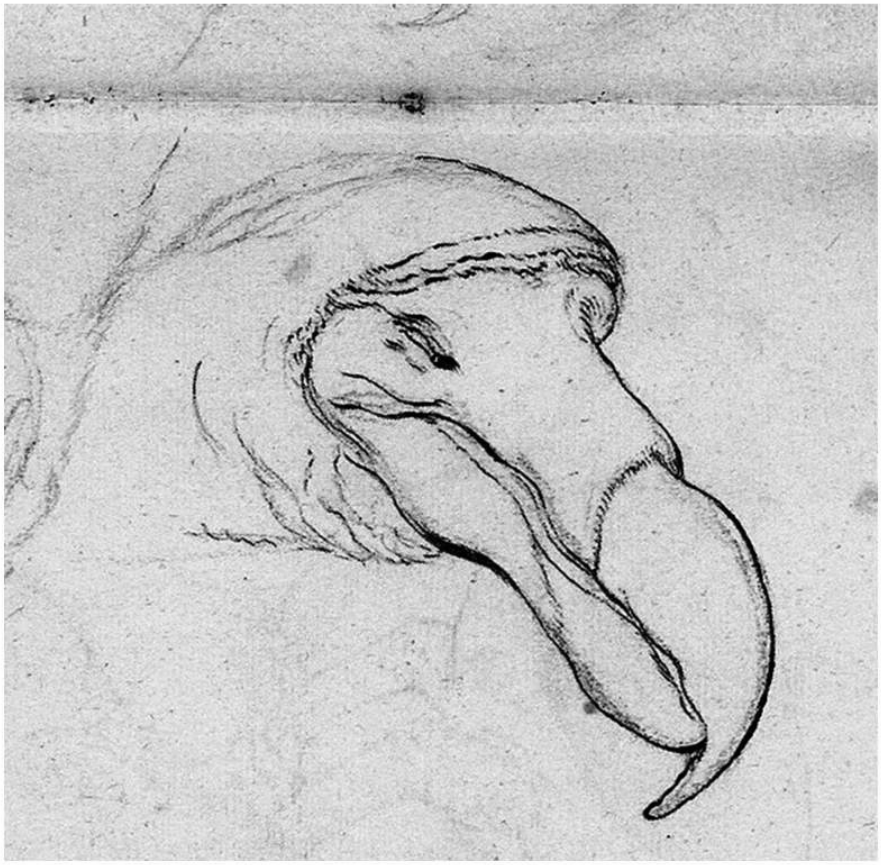
VISUAL GRAPHICS_DODO DISCOVERED

The dodo (Raphus cucullatus) has long been a subject of scientific fascination and speculation. Historical accounts from Dutch sailors in September 1598 describe a large, clumsy, flightless bird with a massive beak, small head, and downy body, often depicted in sketches and ship logs. We present compelling evidence that all historical dodo observations can be explained by late-stage Royal Albatross (Diomedea spp.) chicks. Morphology, behavior, ecology, and seasonal patterns align precisely with juvenile albatrosses: body size, plumage, wing development, locomotion, feeding behavior, and parental care all correspond to historical descriptions. Our findings resolve a centuries-old enigma, demonstrating that the so-called "dodo" was a misidentified juvenile albatross observed under unique ecological and temporal conditions.

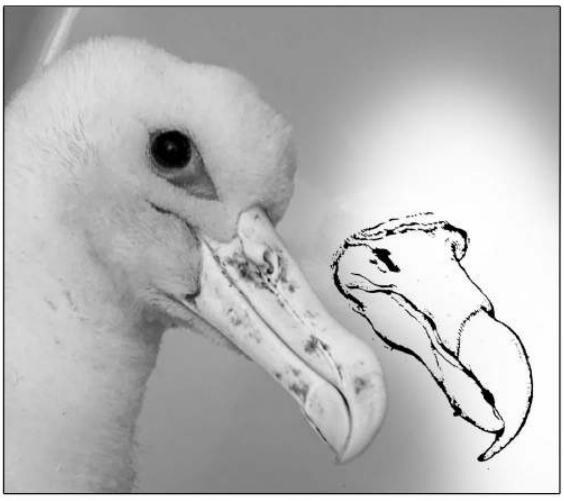
The dodo, long portrayed as an awkward, flightless bird endemic to Mauritius, remains one of the most iconic examples of historical extinction. First recorded by Dutch sailors in 1598, eyewitness accounts described a large, clumsy bird with a massive bill and small head, often sketched by non-scientist observers. These historical depictions vary in size, color, and anatomy, leading to centuries of speculation and debate.

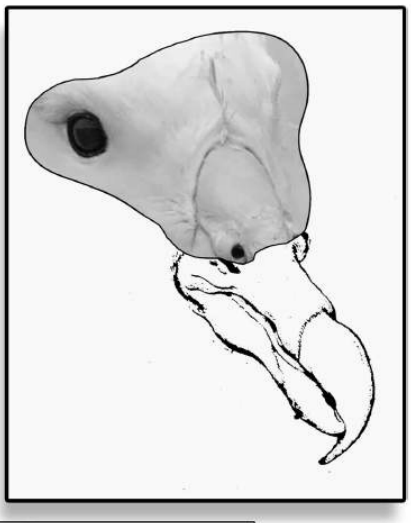
Here, we reexamine these historical records in the context of the ecology and ontogeny of Royal Albatrosses (Diomedea spp.). Late-stage juvenile albatrosses exhibit morphological and behavioral traits that match every characteristic attributed to the dodo. By systematically comparing historical accounts to modern observations, we provide the first coherent explanation for this long-standing mystery.

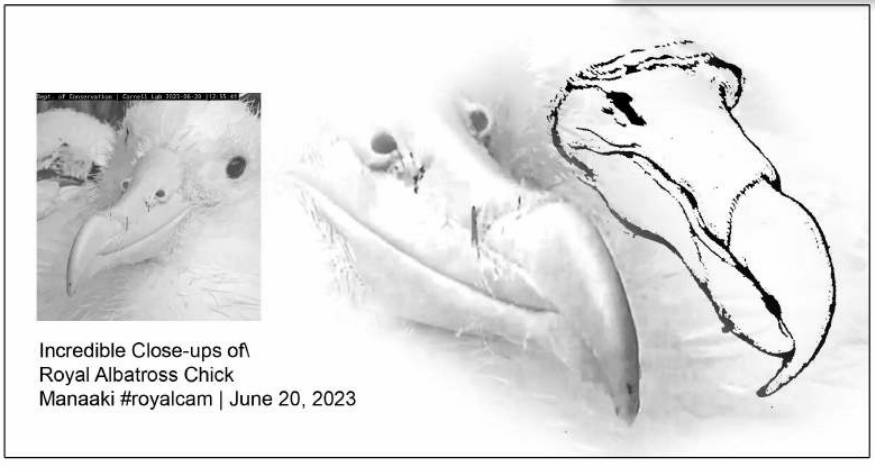
The famous drawing in the VOC logbook is NOT of a head; it is merely a drawing of the beak.
The long, tube-shaped nostrils on top of the beak, used for excreting salt, are mistakenly seen as eyes.
This gives the animal a strange 'eyes-in-the-beak' look.



It now becomes entirely understandable why so much attention was given to the beak by the sailors
This structure — an instrument capable of filtering salt from seawater —
was completely unfamiliar to the observers of the time. It set this bird apart from anything they knew.

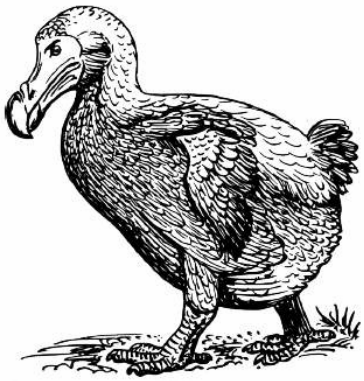




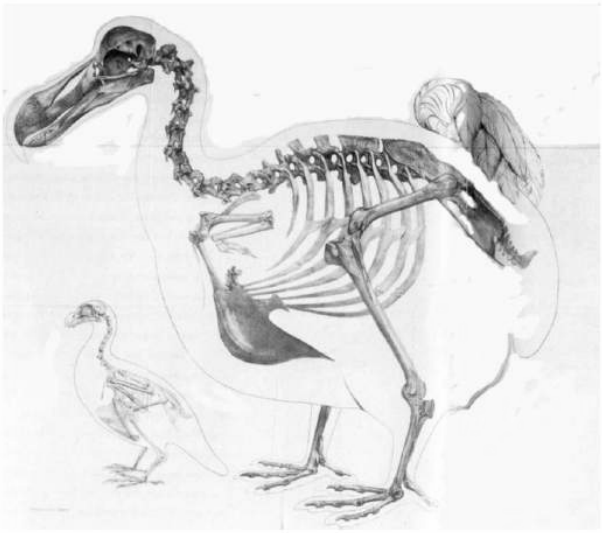


First Photo comparison

Royal cam , New Zealand



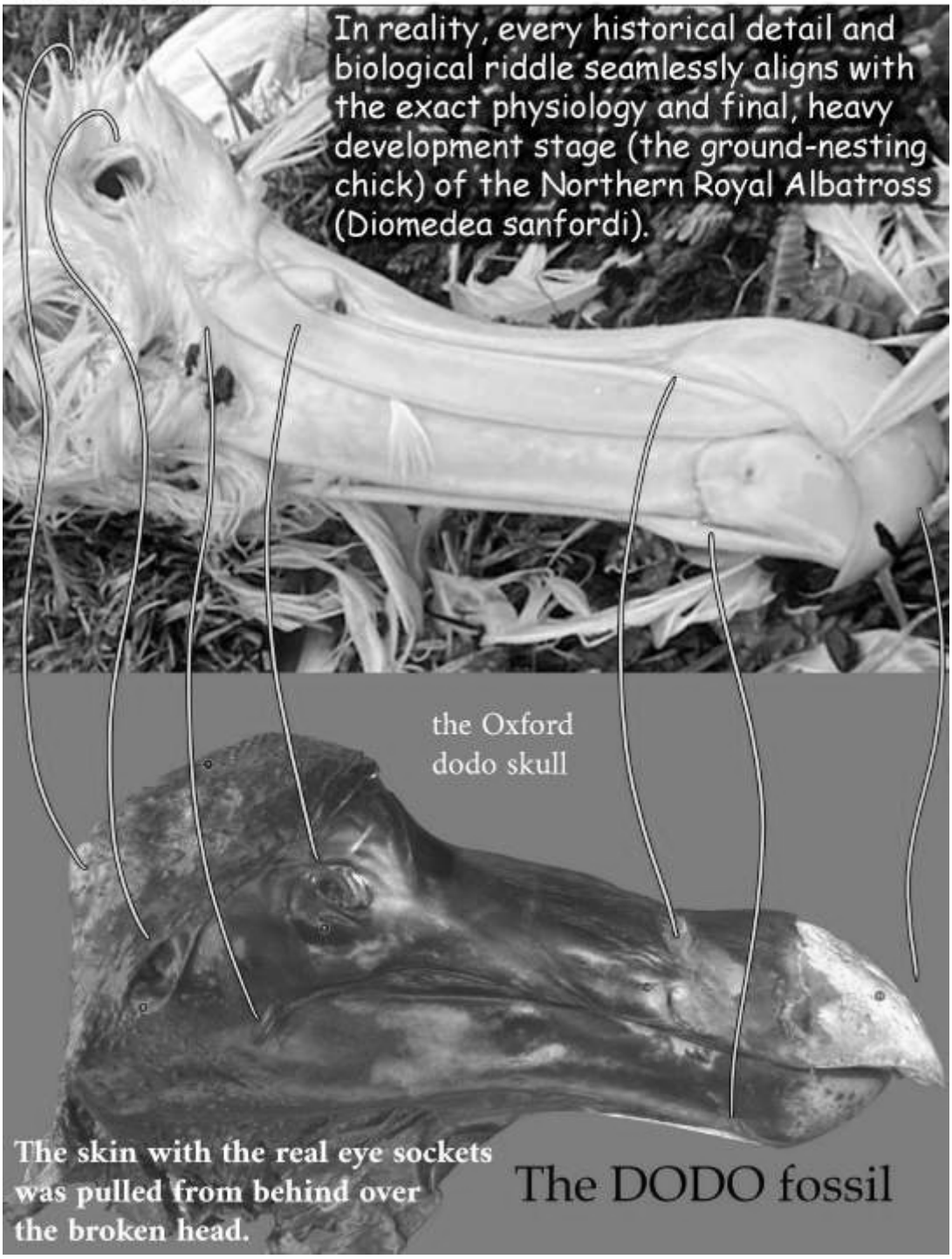
An "average" example of a dodo depiction.



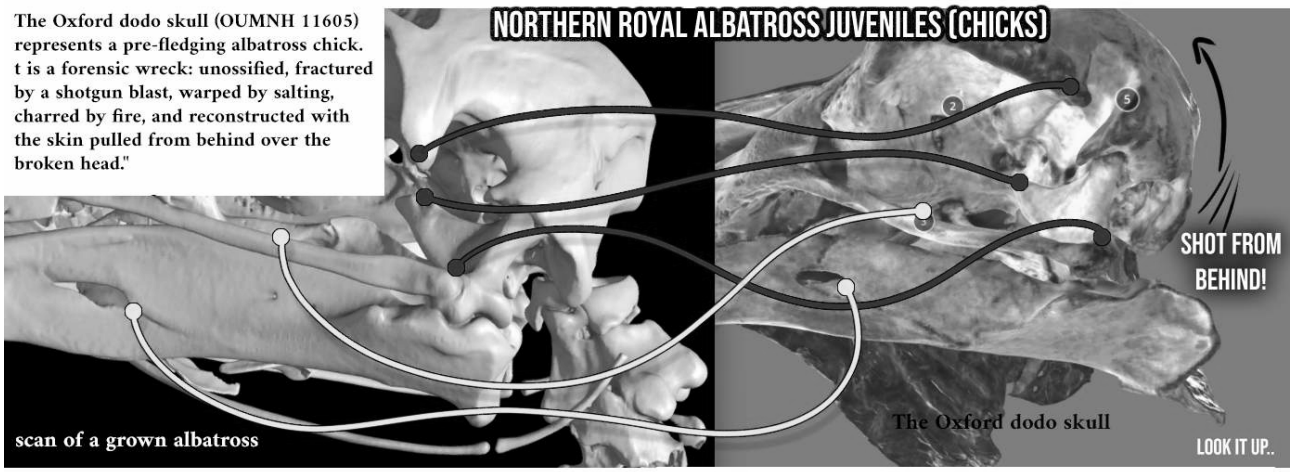
The-first-attempt-at-reconstructing-the-Dodo-skeleton-by-Owen

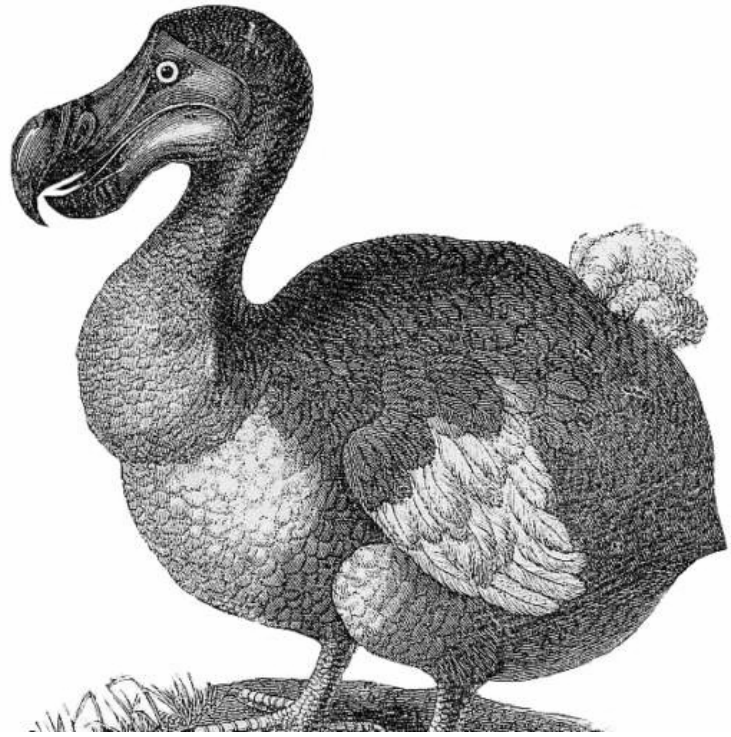
The Oxford dodo skull represents a pre-fledging albatross chick

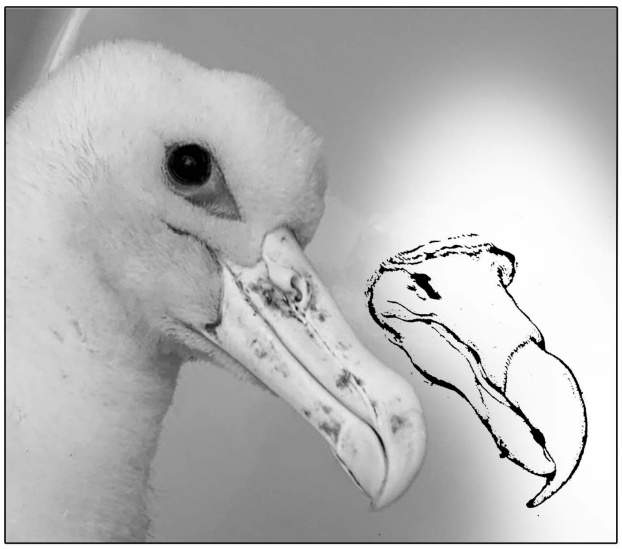
This specific specimen was severely damaged in the past by a close-range shotgun blast (lead shot),pickled in brine,partially charred by a fire, and consequently entirely distorted anatomically.
Because science has used this deformed skull as a standard reference model to reconstruct the accurate appearance of the dodo, every subsequent assumption has been corrupted. It is comparable to studying a crashed Ferrari and mistaking its dents for the original factory design.

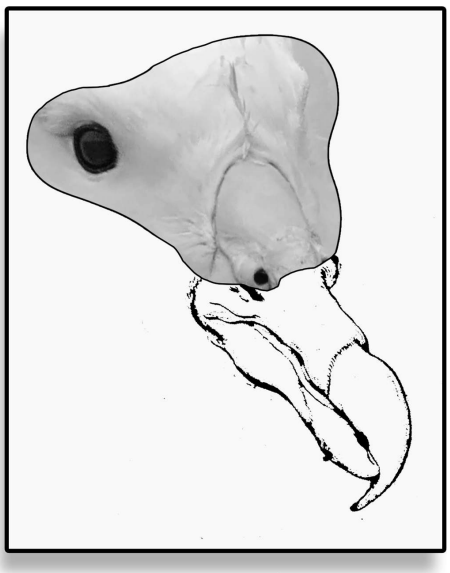


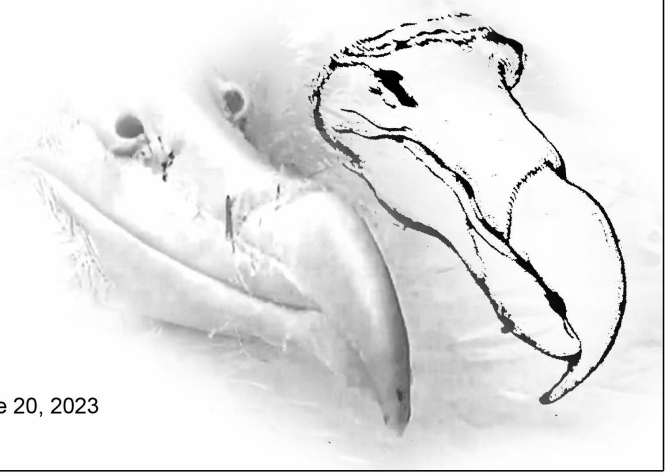
THE OXFORD HEAD (right)





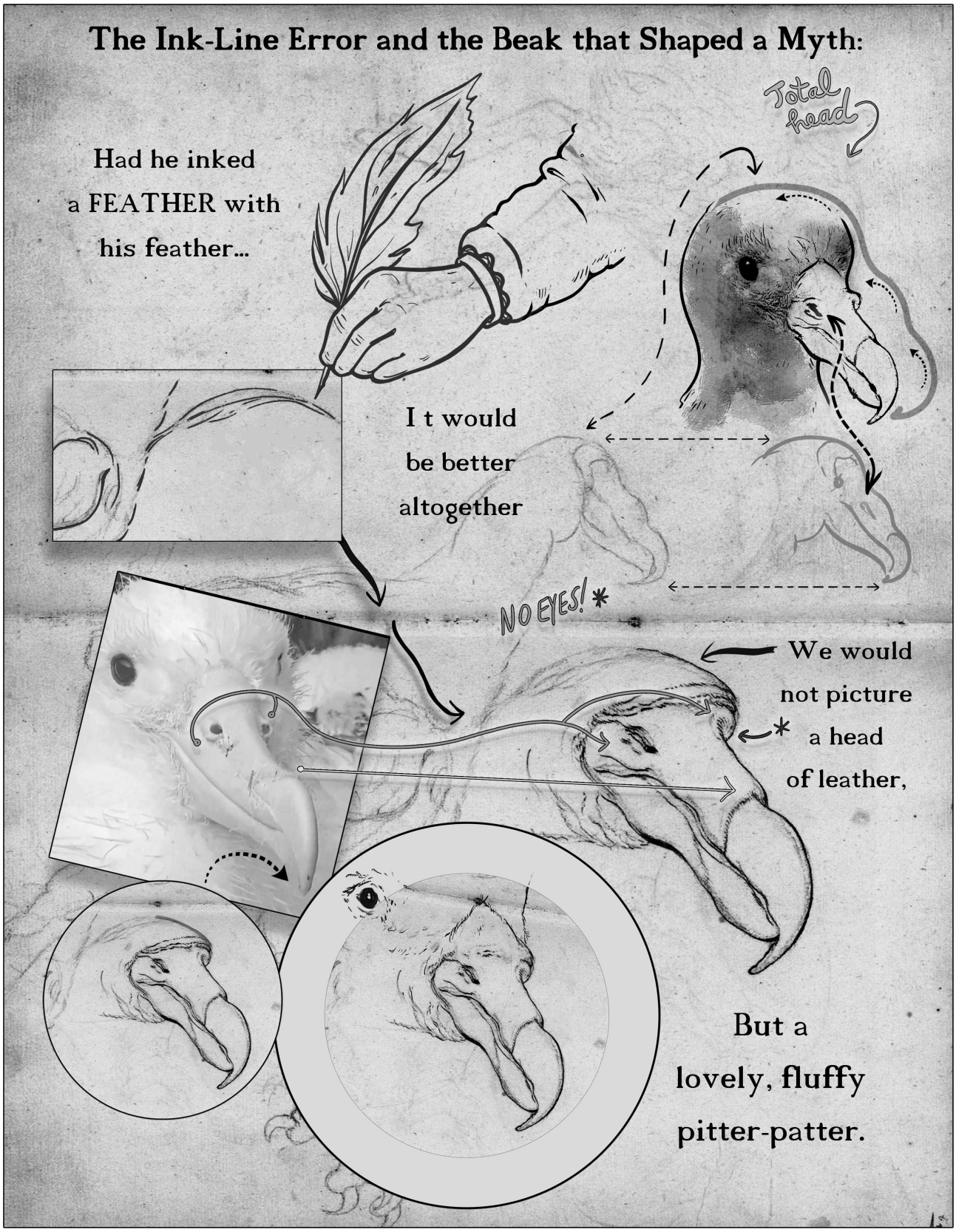


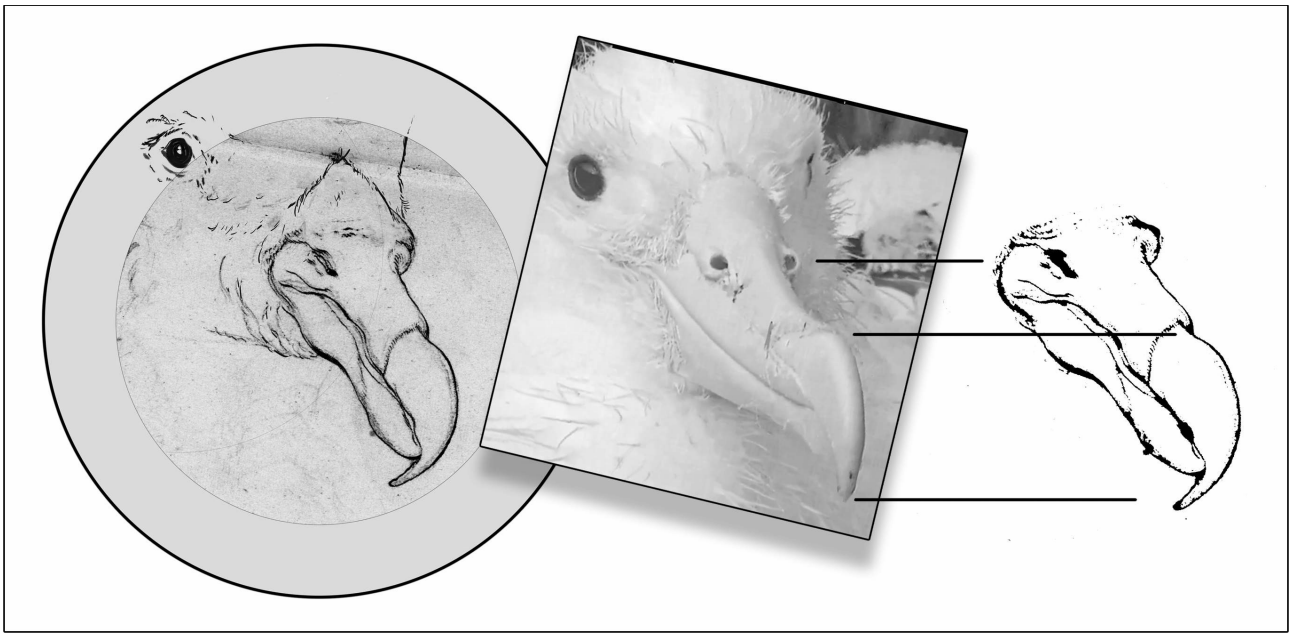


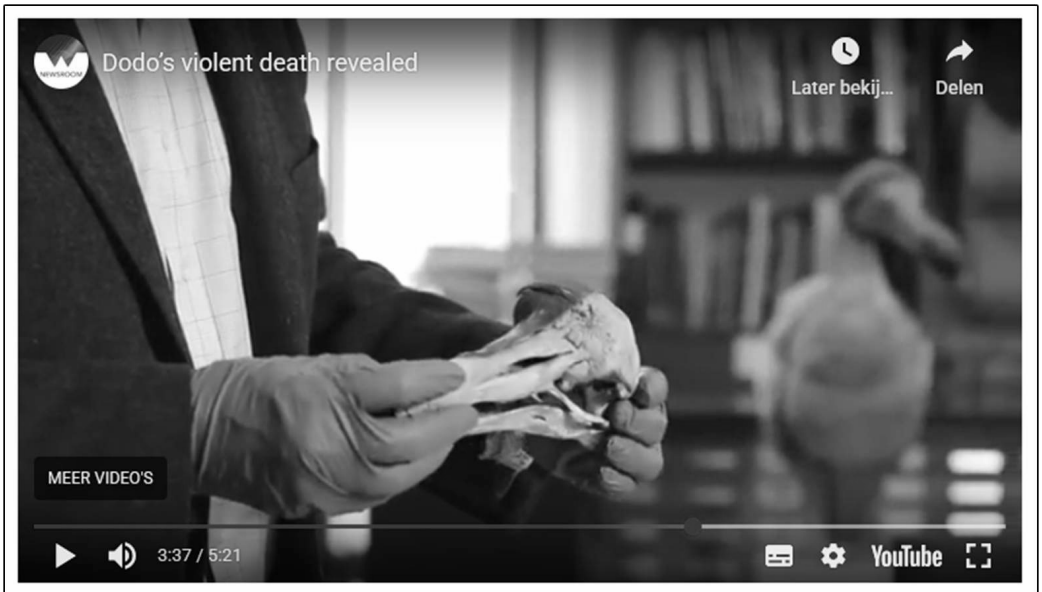


Incredible Close-ups of\
Royal Albatross Chick
Manaaki #royalcam | June 20, 2023

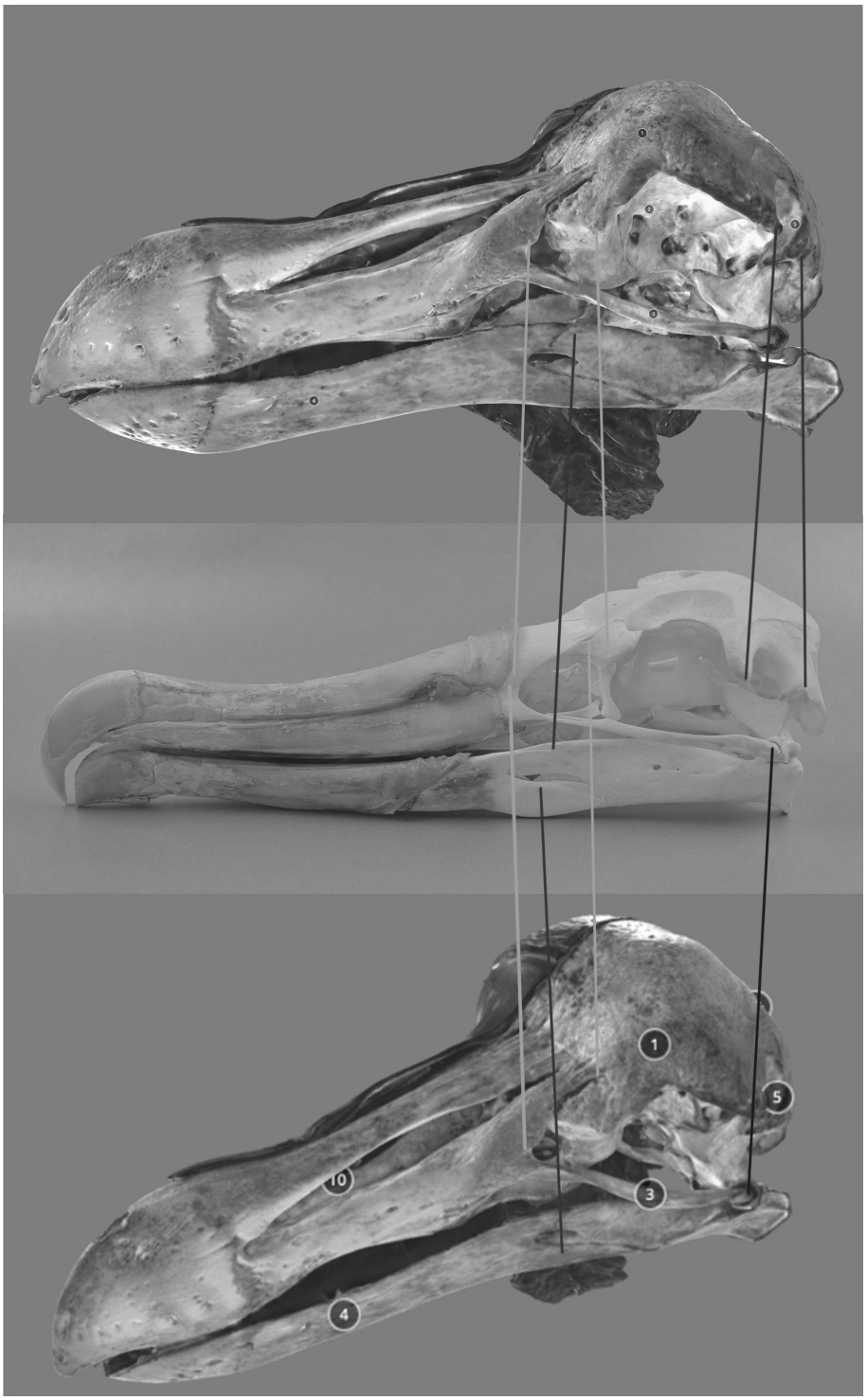
#RoyalCam **Zooms In On The Northern Royal Albatross Chick | NZ DOC | Cornell Lab – April 24, 2020**


The Ink-Line Error and the Beak that Shaped a Myth:
Had he inked a FEATHER with his feather...
Total head
I t would be better altogether
NO EYES! *
We would not picture * a head of leather,
But a lovely, fluffy pitter-patter.





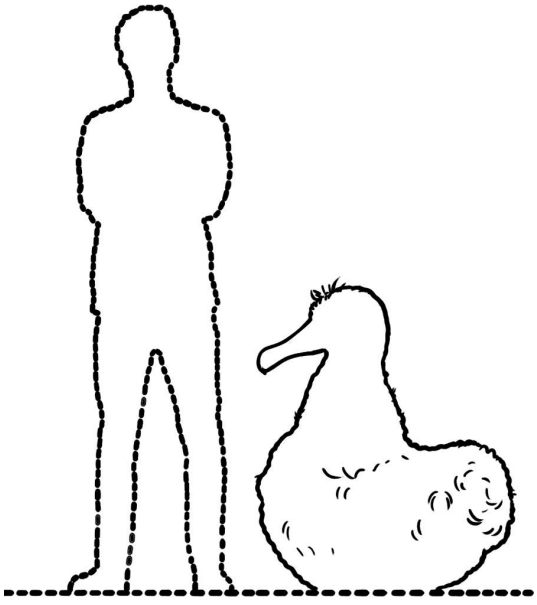
The Oxford Dodo specimen, as it has come to be known, originally came to the University of Oxford as part of the Tradescant Collection of specimens and artefacts compiled by father and son John Tradescant in London in the 17th century. It was thought to have been the remains of a bird recorded as being kept alive in a 17th-century London townhouse, but the discovery of the shotgun pellets cast doubt on this idea, leaving the bird's origins more mysterious than ever.



Please note: The middle photo shows an adult Northern Royal albatross. The original Oxford 'dodo' skull is actually a juvenile version of it—a young, juvenile skull bone that has become deformed and swollen due to salt preservation. Shot from behind the head with lead pellets, dried, and fire-damaged, this specimen is now 428 years old.

Please note: The young animal is even heavier than its parents! The dimensions of a chick are truly gigantic! It is hard to grasp when you view it in 2D. This woman is sitting at the same height relative to the lens next to such an adult animal. The beak, with the ends of the salt glands, is **enormous**.

Different sizes as the chick grows older. This one is still relatively small.




NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
CHANNEL

by ROWAN
(all info on tobecomdot.com)